



YOUR voice can make all the difference: act NOW!

Please write to Oxfordshire by October 30th to keep Sonning Eye out of their new minerals plan.

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With a planning application for 30 years' digging and landfill now imminent, it's vital we all write **now** to pre-empt Lafarge. We need to show OCC just how real are our worries about increased flooding and planning blight on the area. Write now to get Sonning Eye removed from the OCC list of sites for gravel extraction. We are calling a **public meeting** on either **Tuesday October 11** or **Friday October 14** at Dunsden Lodge, Sonning Eye at 8pm. Please telephone Annabella (969 2264) or email dunsden@aol.com to confirm which date is most convenient.

How serious is the flooding risk?

We have mapped local property levels against the 2003 flood level. Almost half of the houses in Sonning Eye would have flooded if levels had continued much longer. Every further 10cm of level rise would have flooded another 3 houses. We have very real fears that not only will huge soil banks hold up flood flows, replacing porous gravel with impermeable landfill will also make flooding in Sonning Eye much, much worse.

How should I respond?

Please write to Lois Partridge, Planning Policy Officer, Oxfordshire County Council, Speedwell House, Speedwell Street, Oxford OX1 1NE or visit this link: <http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/links/public/mineralsandwastepolicy>. **Do this by 30/10.**

What should I say?

The words you use are up to you, but consider:

- By leaving massive soil banks on the floodplain Lafarge operates in a way that completely conflicts with Government rules, and that makes flooding risks much higher.

- OCC has neglected its duty to protect areas at high risk from flooding from the impact of gravel extraction. Without landfill, the extraction would have far less impact on the local community.
- Sonning Eye is a Conservation Area and its setting must be protected. There is plenty of gravel downstream towards Shiplake, where the impact of the plant and proposed landfill from an army of trucks driven by local builders will be far, far less.
- Every time floods block the road, the disruption to local traffic and to our lives is massive.
- After around 70 years of gravel extraction locally, enough is enough for Sonning Eye.

Who else is involved?

We have taken the advice of our MP and County Councillor, to whom you might like to copy your letter. You might also like to copy your response to Councillor Judith Nimmo-Smith, SODC cabinet member for flooding: 78 St Andrews Road Henley on Thames, Oxon RG9 1JE. SEAG has also taken consultants' advice, this is attached.

What next?

We expect to scrutinise Lafarge's planning application for 30+ years of gravel extraction very carefully when it finally arrives. Besides flooding and planning blight on Sonning Eye, we will be looking at the impact on archaeology at the site, on the Thames Path and on landscape value. SEAG is not opposed to the principle of gravel extraction. It is however opposed to gravel extraction that makes flooding worse and that blights the area. **We will be asking for your support then.**

www.seag.org.uk

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